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PREFACE

7th SEASTAR

Dec.13-14,2006.

I am very glad to meet so many participants in this workshop. We reach our 7th SEASTAR and 3rd Asian Bio-logging Research Society joint workshop this year. The subjects are always focused on the aquatic endangered animals and their environmental conditions in ASEAN waters. All presentations in the workshop are developing and enrich in their contents year by year. Until up to several years ago, endangered aquatic animal behavior and habitat were hardly known since we could not easily observe their movements visually.

Since 2004, we have tried to make a joint workshop with the Asian Bio-logging Research Society to apply their recording system to analyze the underwater animal behavior. Fundamentally, their research system is based on a micro recording device or ultrasonic transmitter, attached to or inserted into the body. This system is the most suitable for endangered aquatic animal research since we can understand their behavior and migration over a long time without the use of any big research vessels.

In the first stage, SEASTAR workshop was focused on the research of the behavior of sea turtles as you know, and we discussed a plan of how to avoid incidental catch of turtles by fishing gear. In next stage, subjects were diverse. We included the research of dugong, Mekong giant cat fish and tuna as well as their environment. They are also endangered aquatic animals. Furthermore, this year we can include the environmental condition and accumulation of heavy metals around the coastal areas. These are very important problems not only for Thailand but also many other East Asian countries.

In the next stage, we wish to make a collaborative research among the countries and show our bio-logging technique to young scientists and students. We can demonstrate that aquatic animal behavior can be understood using these systems. After understanding the behavior, we will make an effective conservation plan. I hope, after 3 years, these processes will be established at our 10th anniversary SEASTAR workshop.

Wataru Sakamoto

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